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ABSTRACT

To make the education system more open and accountable, Alberta (Canada) designated in 1994 the formation of an MLA (Member of Legislative Assembly) implementation team for educational accountability. The MLA team is consulting with Albertans about which results should be included in school reports, which measures should be used to report educational outcomes, and how the results should be communicated. This document is comprised of a discussion paper, which is being used by the MLA team to conduct a third, broader phase of consultation with educational stakeholders during January and February 1995. Following the introduction, section 2 summarizes themes that emerged from the MLA team's consultations, some of which include: (1) parents want more information and better access to results at all levels of reporting; (2) people feel that accountability data must be used to improve education; (3) the public wants to be involved in developing improvement plans; (4) people want to know how the budget relates to educational outcomes; (5) student results should reflect the range of academic and nonacademic achievements; and (6) measures must make sense and be closely linked to improvement goals. Section 3 contains a prototype school report and school board report. The fourth section reports what consultants said they wanted to see regarding contextual information, student results, financial information, satisfaction measures, improvement goals and action plans, communication of educational outcomes, and their suggestions for improving the prototype reports. An attached booklet contains a questionnaire for gathering feedback on the prototype reports. (LMI)

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talking with albertans

ED 386 823

ACCOUNTABILITY IN EDUCATION

DISCUSSION PAPER

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Please mail or fax your comments on the discussion paper and any other advice about accountability in education to:

Mr. Victor Doerksen
Chairman, MLA Implementation Team on Accountability
725 Legislature Annex, 9718 - 107 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 1E4
Fax: (403) 422-1671

by February 28, 1995.

For additional information about the MLA Team's consultations on accountability, please contact:

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VICTOR DOERKSEN, M.L.A.
RED DEER SOUTH CONSTITUENCY

January 9, 1995

To: School Board Chairpersons
Superintendents of Schools
Secretary-Treasurers
School Principals
School Councils

RE: Accountability Discussion Paper

The MLA Accountability Team, established by Education Minister Halvar C. Jonson in March, 1994, is continuing to consult with Albertans. We are seeking advice about the results people want reported by schools and school districts, measures that provide meaningful information, and the best ways to communicate results information and involve people in follow-up activities.

The enclosed discussion paper will give you information on key themes that have emerged from accountability consultations held during the summer and fall of 1994. Also included are prototype school and school board results reports and question guides to assist you in providing advice to the MLA Team. The discussion paper is being used to consult with parents, school councils, education associations and other partners during January and February.

Your ideas and comments are important. Please complete the question guide and mail or fax your comments and any advice about accountability to me by February 28, 1995.

The MLA Accountability Team is committed to working with Albertans in developing a more accountable education system responsive to the needs of students, parents, educators and the community.

Sincerely,

Victor Doerksen, Chairman
Accountability Framework and
Performance Measures
MLA, Red Deer South

Alberta
GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA

News release

EDMONTON, January 9, 1995

"Since last June we've been working with Albertans to determine how better accountability would improve education for Alberta students. Based on what we've heard, we've developed a prototype school report and a prototype school board report. Now we need to hear more from Albertans about the information they want reported by their schools and boards."

Halvar Jonson
Minister of Education

EDUCATION ACCOUNTABILITY DISCUSSION PAPER RELEASED

The government's MLA Implementation Team on Accountability in Education has developed a discussion paper on accountability in education to encourage comments and suggestions from Albertans. "We want to hear what information Albertans want about schools and school boards," said Victor Doerksen, Chair of the MLA team. "We are also very interested in their thoughts about schools and boards sharing this information with parents and others through their reports."

The team, including Doerksen, MLA, Red Deer-South; Jocelyn Burgener, MLA, Calgary-Currie; and Mark Hlady, MLA, Calgary-Mountain View; began its consultation with Albertans six months ago. Three groups of parents were consulted in June and July on what they wanted to know about the performance of the education system. In November and December, three focus group sessions included parents, teachers, employers, principals, superintendents, school trustees, secretary-treasurers, post-secondary instructors and accountants, who were asked how well the information in the prototype reports answered their questions about education.

The discussion paper will form the basis of more than 20 meetings with parents, school councils, education associations and partners over the next two months. It will also be distributed to more than 3,000 individuals and groups who will be encouraged to submit written responses.

To request a copy of the accountability discussion paper call Colleen Ostashek at 427-8217. Written comments and any other written advice about accountability in education should be mailed or faxed to Victor Doerksen, Chairman of the MLA Implementation Team on Accountability, 725 Legislature Annex, 9718-107 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T5K 1E4 , fax: 422-1671, by February 28, 1995.

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For more information:

Victor Doerksen
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ACCOUNTABILITY IN EDUCATION
DISCUSSION PAPER

Table of Contents

Section One	Introduction
Section Two	Summary of Themes Emerging From the MLA Team's Consultations
Section Three	Prototype School Report Prototype School Board Report
Section Four	Feedback: What the MLA Team Has Heard in Consultations So Far

Specific Information People Want to See in Results Reports
- Contextual Information
- Student Results
- Financial Information
- Satisfaction Measures
- Improvement Goals and Action Plans

What People Said About Communicating Results

What People Said About Using Results and Involving Them in Follow-Up Activities

Other Suggestions About the Content of Prototype Results Reports

Other Specific Comments About Measures in the Prototype Reports

INTRODUCTION

Open and Accountable Education System

Albertans have communicated a need to achieve a better, more open and accountable education system. This is a key goal in Alberta Education's Three Year Business Plan.

MLA Accountability Implementation Team

To meet this need, Education Minister Halvar C. Jonson, in March 1994, struck an MLA Implementation Team on Education Accountability.

The MLA team is chaired by Victor Doerksen, MLA, Red Deer South. Other members are: Jocelyn Burgener, MLA Calgary-Currie and Mark Hlady, MLA Calgary Mountain View.

The MLA team is working with a multistakeholder advisory committee on the collecting and public reporting of education results information.

MLA Team's Consultations

The MLA team is consulting with Albertans to obtain advice about:

- the most important results people want reported by schools and school districts;
- the measures that provide Albertans with meaningful information in these important results areas; and
- the best ways to communicate results information and involve people in follow-up activities that use results to improve student learning and the overall performance of the education system.

This discussion paper on accountability in education is part of the MLA team's consultation process.

Consultations: What's Done and What's Starting

The MLA team has already conducted two phases of consultations:

- Three groups of parents were convened in June and July 1994 to talk about accountability in education and what they would like to know about the performance of education at the provincial, school district, and school levels.

- In November and December, three groups consisting of parents, teachers, trustees, superintendents, secretary-treasurers, principals, employers / business community, and post-secondary instructors were convened to discuss school and school board prototype annual results reports. These groups also advised on what needs to be done with the information.

The MLA team is using this discussion paper to conduct a third, broader phase of consultation with parents, school councils, education associations and other partners during January and February 1995.

How the Accountability Discussion Paper is Organized

The discussion paper includes:

- a summary of the key themes that have emerged from the consultations;
- prototype school and school board annual results reports;
- summaries of what the MLA Team has heard so far about the information people want reported and how it can be used in ways that make sense; and
- self-contained question guides to assist you in providing advice to the MLA Team.

Your Response to the Discussion Paper

The MLA Team wants to hear from you about the results you want to see reported in school and school district reports and what you think needs to be done to communicate and use results information to improve education.

The following approach is suggested:

First, take a quick look at both the prototype school and school board reports (section three). Write down your initial overall reactions.

Second, read each report in detail and write down your thoughts. Use the question guides to do this, or if you prefer, use blank paper. The questions below are just a starting point.

What information make sense and what doesn't?

Is this the information you want a school or school district to report to you?

What's missing that you really would like to see in the report?

Are the measures the right ones for reporting on the goals?

Are there other measures that would be more meaningful to you?

How you would like this information presented and reported to you?

How would you like to be involved in follow-up activities at the school or school district level?

Third, review **what the MLA Team has heard so far** about the results people want to see reported and suggestions for communicating and using this information in ways that make sense (section four).

What do you think?

What do you agree with?

Write your thoughts down on the "what we heard" pages and include these with your response to the MLA Team.

Please mail or fax your comments on the discussion paper and any other advice about accountability in education to:

Mr. Victor Doerksen
Chairman, MLA Implementation Team on Accountability
725 Legislature Annex, 9718 - 107 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 1E4
Fax: (403) 422-1671

by February 28, 1995.

SUMMARY OF THEMES EMERGING FROM THE MLA TEAM'S CONSULTATIONS

- Parents want more information and are very interested in school results
- Parents and the public want better access to results at all levels of reporting
- People want good value for the tax dollars spent on producing results reports: all the accountability data must be used to improve education
- Parents and the community want to be involved in developing improvement plans to address strengths and weaknesses and celebrate success
- People want to know how school budgets are being spent in relation to results achieved
- Students need to be heard from more often e.g., through satisfaction surveys
- Results reports need to be clear and concise so that people can quickly assess the information
- People want these components in results reports:
  - Contextual information (e.g., number of students, size of teaching staff)
  - Student results (e.g., achievement test results, diploma exam results)
  - Financial information (e.g., how school budgets are spent)
  - Satisfaction measures (e.g., student and parent satisfaction with education)
  - Improvement goals and action plans (e.g., strengths, weaknesses and what's being done)
- Student results need to reflect the range of student achievements, academic and non-academic
- Measures must make sense and link closely to the improvement goals so they help people assess how well the goals are attained

Prototype School Performance Report

Hypothetical Data

Evergreen Senior High School

Contents

Page

- Messages 1
- Context 2
- Results 4
- Next Steps 10

Messages

- From School Council Chair -

- From School Principal -

- From Student Council President -

School Education Plan

Each year Forest School Board revises and extends the District's Three Year Education Plan by an additional year. *Planting Trees: A Three Year Education Plan* sets out the key directions for district schools. In keeping with the District Plan, Evergreen High School's education plan sets out (1) the school goals that support these directions, (2) the results we're striving for, (3) the strategies for improvement, and (4) the measures by which the administration, teachers, parents, students and community members will determine the success of the plan.

Evergreen Senior High is committed to informing its parents, community members, staff and trustees about how well we have achieved our goals and the role we played in achieving the District's and Province's goals.

Each year, Evergreen Sr. High School establishes improvement objectives based on the results achieved during the previous planning and reporting cycle. Although each of the following areas are important, our 1996/97 education plan emphasized three improvement objectives:

* **School / Community-Based Management**
* **Coordination of Services**
* **Student Achievement**

Staff Development
Student Completion
Accountability / Openness
Parent Involvement / Community Relations
Student Behavior
Student Involvement
School Curriculum / Learning Expectations
School Facilities and Appearance

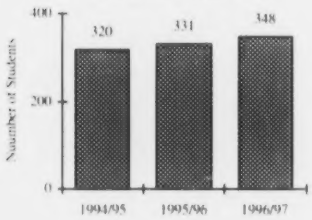
for discussion purposes only (hypothetical data)

- Enrolment -

Enrolment in 1996/97

	Total	Male	Female
Grade 10	102	50	52
Grade 11	96	45	51
Grade 12	123	64	59
ESL	18	8	10
Special Education	9	7	2
TOTALS	348	174	174

Student Enrolment Over Time: 1994/95 - 1996/97



- Extracurricular Activities -

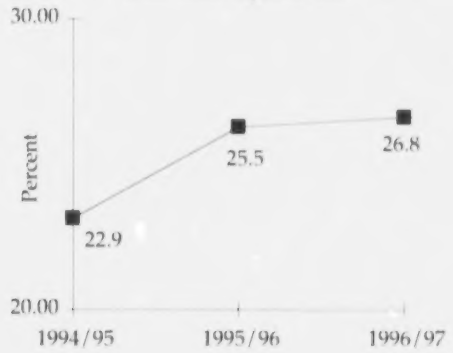
		'94/95	'95/96	'96/97
Average # of after-school-hours/staff/week		8.6	7.5	7.9
% of students involved in intramural sports	Male	31%	28%	35%
	Female	23%	19%	17%
% of students involved in inter-school sports	Male	21%	18%	18%
	Female	11%	13%	9%
# of public performances by School Band		11	6	7
% of students working 10 or more hours outside of school		18%	23%	25%

# of students involved in Annual Play (Fiddler on the Roof)	43
% of students providing community services	27%
Median hours of community service provided hrs/week	3.2

- Staffing -

	'94/95	'95/96	'96/97
Teaching	14	13	13
Administration	6	4	4
Custodial	3	2	2
Para Professionals	4	3	4
Total	27	22	23

Classroom Student/Teacher Ratio* (Full Time Equivalent)



* Number of students divided by number of teachers in classrooms.

- Mobility -

Mobility Rate (October to June of each year*)

	'94/95	'95/96	'96/97
Transfers out of Evergreen	2.2%	2.1%	1.4%
New Registrations	8.1%	11.2%	8.6%
Withdrawals from Evergreen	0.9%	1.8%	1.4%

* September data not included.

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Context Con't

- Programs -

Career and Technology Studies

Percent of Students Enroled in One or More Strands: 41%

	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97
Evergreen	33%	35%	41%
Forest SB	30%	32%	34%

Strand	# of modules Offered	Cost/ Student	User Fees?
Agriculture	2	$	N
Career Transitions	3	$	N
Communication Tech.	3	$	N
Enterprise & Innovation	2	$	N
Financial Man.	1	$	N
Info. Processing	3	$	Y
Man. and Marketing	2	$	N
Mechanics	1	$	Y
Tourism Studies	1	$	N

Other Optional Programs Offered

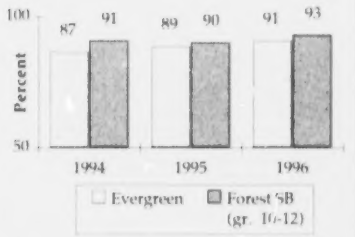
	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97
2nd Language			
Fine & Performing Arts			
Personal Development			
Integrated Occupational Pgm.			
International Baccalaureate			

Registered Apprenticeship Program

	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97
% of Students enroled:	7%	9%	8%
# of businesses involved:	13	19	23

- Student Conduct -

Attendance Rates (%)



Incidence of Vandalism

Cost of Damage	'94/95	'95/96	'96/97
$1 - $99	3	6	3
$100 - $499	3	3	2
$500 +	1	0	0
Total Dollars	$2,029	$1,563	$917
Cost per Student	$6.34	$4.72	$2.64

Student Suspension Rate

	'94/95	'95/96	'96/97
No. of Students Suspended	5	3	3
No. of Suspensions	6	8	3
Students suspended as a Percent of School Population	1.56%	0.91%	0.86%

- Satisfaction Surveys -

Members of the school and its community are surveyed every two years in key areas to help assess progress toward key goals. The surveys relate to school characteristics such as student achievement, quality of information received, role in school decision-making and value for money. To ensure clear responses, a number of specific questions were used in the survey to cover a key area. However, these are summarized into one measure for reporting purposes. For example, to measure how well the school is run, parents are asked specific questions related to programming, finances and services offered.

The following table outlines the response rates and margins of error of the 1996/97 surveys compared to the 1994/95 surveys.

	Students	Parents	Community & Business Members	Teachers
1994/95				
Total Surveyed	200	200	50	14
% Responding	60.5%	46.5%	58.0%	92.9%
Margin of Error	± 4	± 7	± 6	±2

	Students	Parents	Community & Business Members	Teachers
1996/97				
Total Surveyed	200	200	50	13
% Responding	57.5%	51.0%	74.0%	92.3%
Margin of Error	± 4	± 6	± 5	± 2

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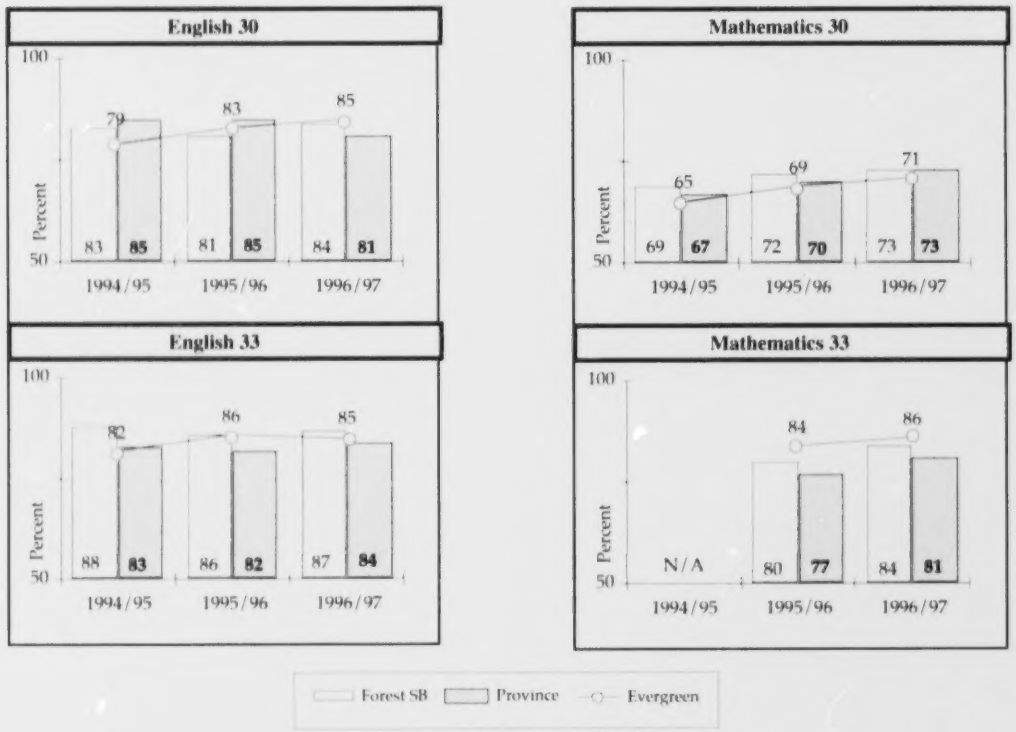
Results

- Goal 1 -

Focus education on what students need to know; ensure that high standards are established, communicated and achieved.

Measure:

Percentage of Students Achieving Acceptable Results* on Diploma Exams: Evergreen Sr. High School Compared To Forest School Board and the Province Over Time



* Students who achieve acceptable results receive an exam mark of 50% or higher.

The Board and Province expect at least 85% of students to do well - 70% to achieve acceptable results and at least 15% to achieve excellent results (an exam mark of 80% or higher).

Evergreen Diploma Examination Participation Rates Compared to Provincial Rates

		'94/95	'95/96	'96/97			'94/95	'95/96	'96/97
English	30	similar	above	below	Math	30	above	above	below
	33	n/a	similar	similar		33	n/a	below	below

What Does This Tell Us?

- Evergreen students did better in English 30 in 1996/97, although the proportion of students taking English 30 declined compared to the provincial rates.
- Performance in English 33 has improved to better than the provincial average. This is almost on par with performance in Forest School Board.
- Performance of Evergreen students has improved in Math 30 but test results remain lower than the district and provincial averages. The participation rate has declined to below the provincial level.
- In Math 33, Evergreen students are above the district and provincial averages while participation rates are below provincial levels.

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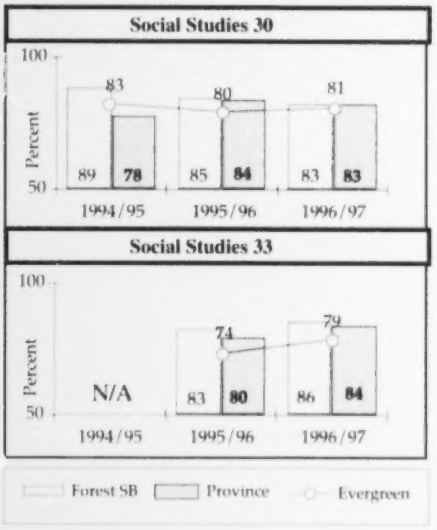
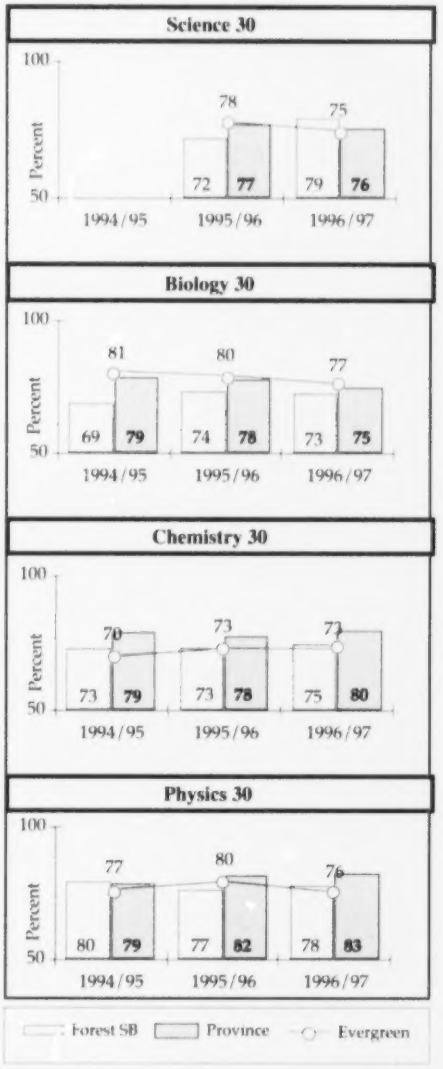
Results Con't

- Goal 1 Con't -

Measure:

Percentage of Students Achieving Acceptable Results* on Diploma Exams: Evergreen Sr. High School Compared To Forest School Board and the Province Over Time





Evergreen Diploma Examination Participation Rates Compared to Provincial Rates

		'94/95	'95/96	'96/97
Social	30	similar	similar	above
	33	n/a	above	above
Science	30	n/a	above	below
Biology	30	below	below	above
Chem	30	below	similar	above
Physics	30	below	below	above

* Students who achieve acceptable results receive an exam mark of 50% or higher.

The Board and Province expect at least 85% of students to do well - 70% to achieve acceptable results and at least 15% to achieve excellent results (an exam mark of 80% or higher).

What Does This Tell Us?

- Performance of Evergreen students in Social Studies 30 has remained consistent over time, but is not quite as good as the district and provincial averages. Participation rates in 1996/97 are better than the provincial rates.
- Although improving, Evergreen students need to do better in Social Studies 33. Participation was above the provincial rate for both years.
- Performance of Evergreen students in Biology 30 has declined over time, but remains better than the district and provincial averages. Participation rates are now above the provincial rate.
- Evergreen students need to do better in Chemistry 30, Physics 30 and Science 30. Science 30 participation rates are below provincial rates.

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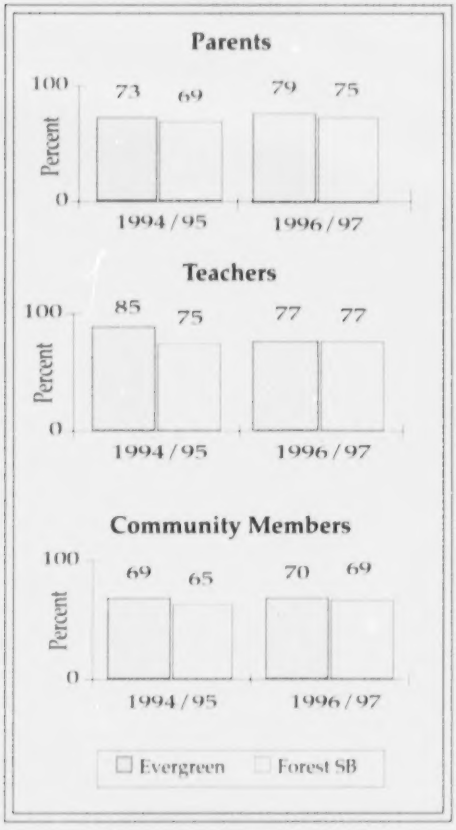
Results Con't

- Goal 2 -

Provide students with greater opportunity to select programs of their choice and enable greater involvement in education for parents and community members.

Measure:

Percent of Evergreen Parents, Teachers and Community Members Who Are Satisfied With Their Role in Decision Making



What Does This Tell Us?

- The percentage of Evergreen parents satisfied with their role in decision making is increasing and is now on par with teacher satisfaction.
- About thirty percent of Evergreen community members are dissatisfied with their role in decision making.

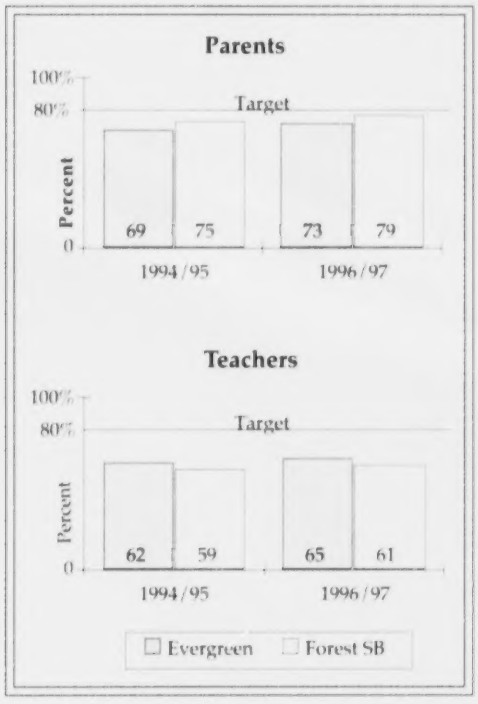
Number of Respondents		
Evergreen	1994/95	1996/97
Parents	93	102
Teachers	13	12
Community	29	37
Forest SB		
Parents	106	112
Teachers	112	97
Community	37	44

- Goal 3 -

Improve the coordination of services for children.

Measure:

Percent of Parents and Teachers Satisfied with the School's Use of Community Agencies to Meet the Needs of Children



What Does This Tell Us?

- Evergreen High School needs to do more to meet its target of 80% satisfaction.
- Evergreen parents are more satisfied than teachers with coordination of services, but they are not up to the district average.
- Evergreen teachers are slightly more satisfied with service coordination than teachers across Forest School Board.

Number of Respondents		
Evergreen	1994/95	1996/97
Parents	93	102
Teachers	13	12
Forest SB		
Parents	106	112
Teachers	112	97

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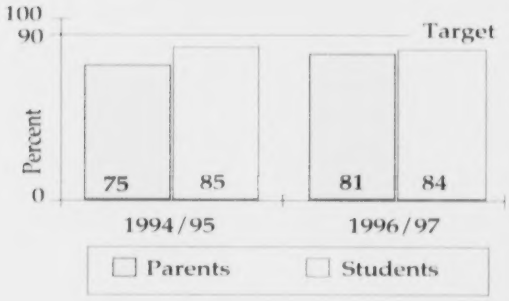
- Goal 4 -

Improve teaching.

Measure:

Percent of Teaching Staff Whose Performance is Rated Satisfactory or Better by Students and Parents.



What Does This Tell Us?

- In 1996/97, the percentage of satisfied parents is comparing more favourably with the percentage of satisfied students.
- More needs to be done to meet the target of 90% satisfaction.

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Results Con't

- Goal 5 -

Achieve increased efficiencies and effectiveness in our school.

Measure:

School Expenditures on Instruction and Non-Instruction

	1994/95 Evergreen ($1.9M)	1994/95 Forest Average	1996/97 Evergreen ($2.1M)	1996/97 Forest Average
Classroom Instruction	**67.2%**	**67.9%**	**69.0%**	69.3%
Classroom Support	**9.9**	**9.1**	**7.2**	**7.9**
Operations **& Maint.**	**11.3**	**11.8**	**10.2**	**9.0**
Special Education	**8.0**	**8.9**	**8.1**	**8.4**
Other	**3.6**	**2.3**	**5.5**	**5.4**
Total Expenditures Per Student	**$4621**	**$5037**	**$4543**	$4938

Note: Classroom Instruction includes teacher salaries and classroom supplies.

Classroom support includes administration, secretaries, librarians, professional development, psychological and health services and guidance counselling.

Other includes extracurricular activities.

What Does This Tell Us?

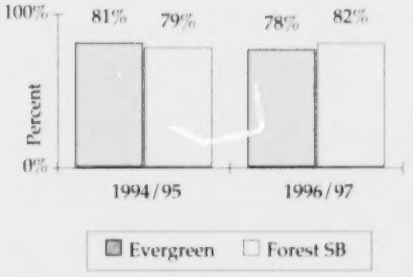
- Evergreen Sr. High School expenditures for 1996/97 are similar to the district's average.
- In 1996/97, Evergreen Sr. High School spent fewer resources on classroom support and operations & maintenance than in 1994/95.

Number of Students

	1994/95	1996/97
Evergreen	320	348
Forest SB	3,703	3,934

Measure:

Percent Of Parents Satisfied That Their School Is Well Run



What Does This Tell Us?

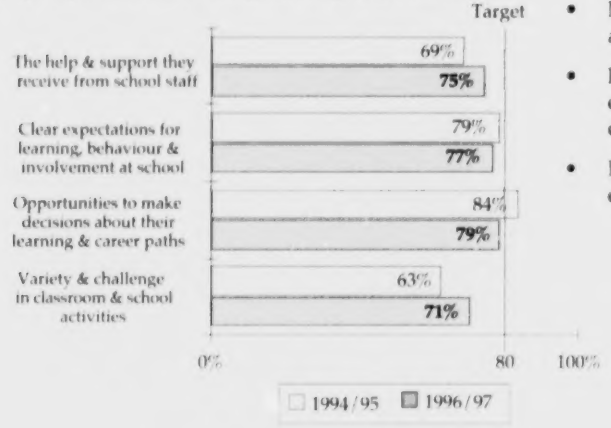
- The number of Evergreen parents who are satisfied with how their school is run has declined slightly and is now below parent satisfaction in the district.

Number of Respondents

	1994/95	1996/97
Evergreen	93	102
Forest SB	106	112

Measure:

Percent of Students Who Are Satisfied With Key Aspects of Their Evergreen High School Eduction



What Does This Tell Us?

- More Evergreen students are satisfied with the help and support received from school staff in 1996/97.
- Fewer students are satisfied with their opportunities to make learning and career path decisions in 1996/97.
- More needs to be done to challenge students in classroom and school activities.

Number of Respondents

	1994/95	1996/97
Students	121	115

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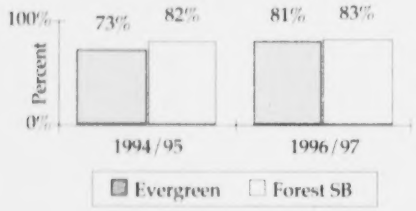
Results Con't

- Goal 6 -

Ensure that the cost of education in our school is reasonable and under control.

Measure:

Percent of Parents and Other Taxpayers Who Are Satisfied That They Are Receiving Value For Their Tax Dollars in Their School



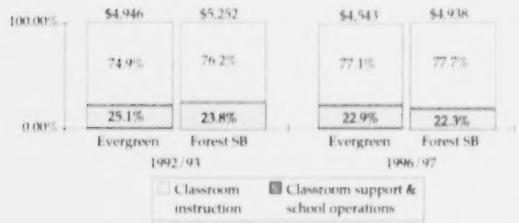
What Does This Tell Us?

- Eighty-one percent of Evergreen parents are satisfied with the value for their tax dollar. Although this is 8% higher than in 1994/95, it remains below the district average.

Number of Respondents	'94/95	'96/97
Evergreen	122	139
Forest	143	156

Measure:

Cost Per Student Compared to 1992/93



Note: Classroom instruction includes salaries and supplies.
Classroom support and school operations includes administration, secretaries, counsellors, librarians, custodians, maintenance and building operations.
Figures for Forest School Board are based on a pro-rated average of all schools with students in grades 10-12.

What Does This Tell Us?

- Evergreen's per student per day spending on instruction has increased and is on par with the district's high school average.

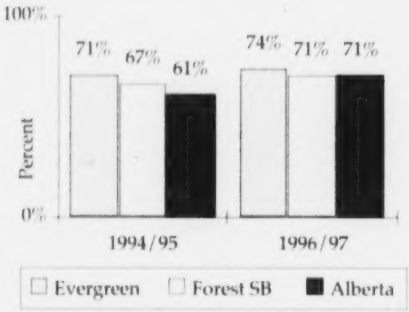
Number of Students	1992/93	1996/97
Evergreen	301	348
Forest Sch. Brd. (10-12)	783	876

- Goal 7 -

Ensure that the school is open and accountable.

Measure:

Are You Satisfied with the Quality of Information You Received From Your Daughter's/Son's School About Your Child's Educational Achievement?



Note: Information may include: report cards, provincial diploma results or other test results, interviews and notes or phone calls from the teacher.

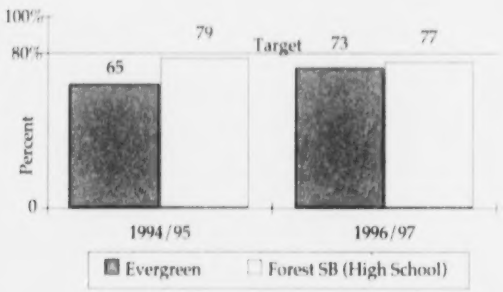
What Does This Tell Us?

- More Evergreen parents continue to be satisfied with the quality of information than Forest School Board or Alberta parents.

Number of Respondents	'94/95	'96/97
Evergreen	93	102
Forest SB	106	112
Alberta	1,067	1,105

Measure:

Parent Satisfaction with the Use of Results Information to Improve Education in this School



What Does This Tell Us?

- In 1996/97 more Evergreen parents are satisfied with the staff's use of results information. However, more needs to be done to reach the target of 80%.

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Next Steps

Performance Grade*:

Each year, Evergreen invites parents, students, teachers, community and business representatives and central office staff to review the school's performance in key areas and assign a grade. Guidelines are provided to help reviewers in this task. In 1996/97, 19 people were involved in this process.

	Benchmark '94/95	'95/96	'96/97
Student Results	❑	❑	❑
Parental/Community Involvement	❑	❑	❑
Coordinated Services	❑	❑	❑
Teaching Excellent	❑	❑	❑
Efficient & Effective	❑	❑	❑
Reasonable Cost	❑	❑	❑
Open & Accountable	❑	❑	❑
Overall Grade	❑	❑	❑

In consideration of the goals for Forest School Board, the school's staff, Student Council, and community members assessed the results of the 1996/97 school year and make the following commitments to improve the quality of education:

By 1998/99

- Achieve an 80% satisfaction level among community members with their role in decision making (10% gain).
  - Conduct three focus groups by January 1998 with business and community representatives, parent council members and school department heads. Discussion will center on removing impediments to involvement in decision making.

By 1999/2000

- The percent of students achieving acceptable performance in Social Studies 33 and Chemistry 30 will increase to 84% and 78% respectively (5% gain).
  - Increase the number of joint activities for students in Social Studies 30 and 33.
  - Establish joint planning activities with other social studies and chemistry teachers in Forest School Board and Mountain Separate School Board.

- Increase the satisfaction of parents and teachers with the school's use of community agencies by 5% (to 78% and 70% respectively).
  - The Assistant Superintendent and the Associate Director for the Forest Regional Child Welfare Board will meet with parents of children with special needs, representatives of service providers and school staff. Recommendations will be tabled with Evergreen School Council and Forest School Board by September 1998 for implementation during the 1998/99 school year.

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Prototype School Board Performance Report

Hypothetical Data

Forest School Board

Prototype School District Performance Report November 1998 *1996/97 School Year*

Contents

Page

- Message 1
- District Education Plan 2
- Context 3
- Results 5
- What Next 15

WHAT WE DO

Your Forest School Board develops policies consistent with broad guidelines established by the Province and the School Act, develops annual three year education plans, annual performance reports and budgets, and hires consultants and other staff to provide educational services to schools.

We are responsible for implementing Programs of Study, monitoring results, and the expenditure of provincial funds. Provincial grants are provided to the board and are allocated to schools on the basis of need and enrolment. In return the Province expects the board to align it's three year education plan and annual performance report with the Provincial plan and performance report.

Message From School Board Chair

Forest School Board believes each child must achieve to his or her potential. This requires everyone in the district to work as hard as they possibly can. On behalf of the board and its administrators, I'm pleased to report that we have had a successful year. Our diploma results in the core subject areas are comparable to or exceed provincial results, the number of schools meeting local performance targets are up, and staffing levels in the classrooms have increased in spite of fiscal restraints.

To help you appreciate the results achieved, we have compared our results over time with the province. As well, we compared some results with the average of 5 similar boards chosen because they have similar geographic, enrolment and demographic characteristics. Their identities are available from the board office.

As you review the results achieved in 1996/97, I hope you will make your own conclusions and then seek answers from your trustees to any questions not addressed in this performance report.

Message From Superintendent

District Education Plan

Each year Forest School Board revises and extends its three year education plan by an additional year. *Planting Trees: A Three Year Education Plan* sets a number of goals for schools and central office staff (see figure 1). As well the plan identifies the strategies to effect change and the measures used to determine how well the plan is achieving the intended results. Although the goals, results, strategies and measures are aligned with the goals, results, strategies and measures outlined in the provincial plan, *Meeting the Challenge*, the plan also addresses local priorities.

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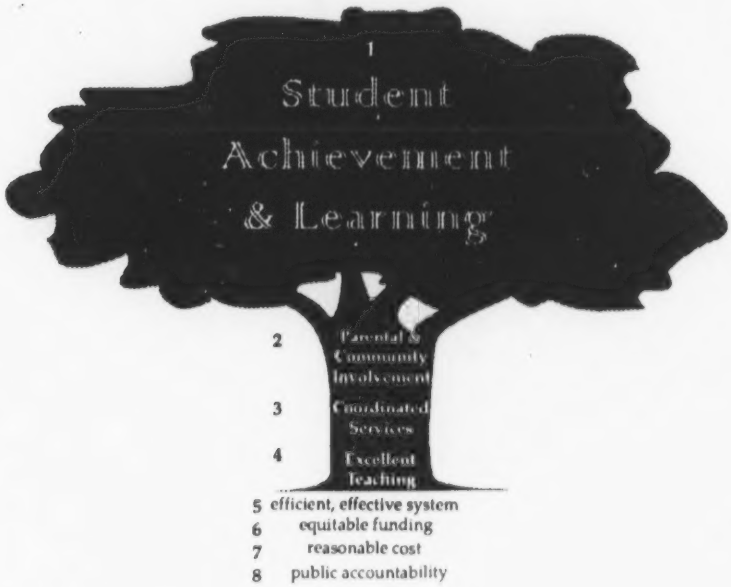
District Education Plan Con't

Figure 1: Goals of District Education Plan



This 1996/97 performance report maintains our commitment to inform parents, school staff, community members and others about the quality of the schooling experience within this district. We expect administrators, parents, staff and other partners to use the information reported to revise the steps they are taking to improve the educational experience offered.

Planting Trees sets a number of expectations for key areas. Although each area is very important, the following table identifies the three areas we emphasized in 1996/97. These were chosen based on the results achieved in the previous planning and reporting cycle.

Top Improvement Objectives for 1996/97

* **Student Achievement**
___ Student Behavior
___ Student Completion
___ School Curriculum/Learning Expectations
___ Staff Development
___ School Facilities and Appearance
* **Parent Involvement/Community Relations**
___ School/Community-Based Management
___ Coordination of Services
___ Accountability/Openness
___ Quality of Programs
* **Efficient Administration of Schools & Central Office**

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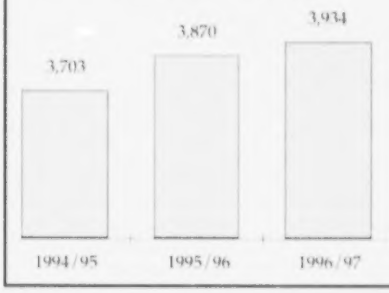
Context

Enrolment

Number of Schools in Forest School Board, 1996/97	
Type of School	Number
ECS to 12	4
Elementary (ECS-6)	5
Junior High (7-9)	3
Senior High (10-12)	2
Total	14

Student Enrolment in Forest SB
1994/95 to 1996/97

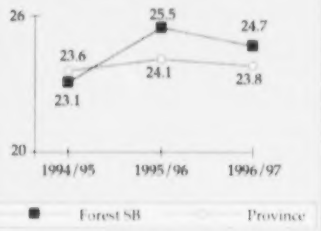


Enrolment in Forest School Board, 1996/97

	Total	Male	Female
Early Childhood Services (ECS)	229	108	121
Elementary (1-6)	1,470	686	784
Junior High (7-9)	870	426	444
Senior High (10-12)	726	352	374
Special Needs	234	118	116
English as a Second Language	312	155	157
Other (Institution, Correspondence)	93	52	41
TOTALS	3,934	1,897	2,037

Staffing

Student-Teacher Ratios*
(full time equivalent)



* Number of students divided by the number of teachers in the classroom.

Schools

Teaching	'94/95	'95/96	'96/97
ECS	15	16	16
Elementary	73	69	72
Junior High	38	36	38
Senior High	34	31	33
Teaching Sub-Totals	160	152	159

Non-Teaching	'94/95	'95/96	'96/97
Support	32	27	24
Custodial	24	18	18
Non-Teaching Sub-Totals	56	45	42

Central Office

	'94/95	'95/96	'96/97
Admin Staff	3	2	2
Teaching Consults.	6	6	6
Support	8	6	6
Custodial	3	2	2
Maintenance	12	11	9
Central Services Sub-Totals	32	27	25

District Totals

	'94/95	'95/96	'96/97
Teaching	160	152	159
Non-teaching	88	72	67
Total FTE's *	248	224	226

* FTE = Full Time Equivalent.

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Mobility

Mobility Rates (October to June of each Year*)

	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97
Transfers between Schools	2.3%	1.7%	2.0%
Transfers out of District	0.9%	0.8%	1.0%
New Registrations	3.0%	3.4%	3.1%
Withdrawals from Schools	0.6%	0.8%	0.4%

* September data not included.

Transportation

	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97
Percentage of students bused	62%	59%	64%
Median route distance/day	78.3km	79.8km	80.2km
Median passenger ride time/day	59 min	63.5 min	65 min
Average cost per passenger/day	$4.47	$4.51	$4.52

Note: Calculations are based on 190 instructional days per year.

Student Conduct

Incidence of Vandalism

Cost of Damage *	'94/95	'95/96	'96/97
$1 - 99	45	51	49
$100 - $499	29	22	27
$500 +	7	4	5
Total	$15,733	$13,453	$14,235
Dollar Cost/Student	$4.25	$3.48	$3.62

* Adjusted for inflation

Suspension Rates

	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97
Number of Students Suspended	36	33	43
Number of Suspensions	49	42	54
Number of Students Suspended as a Percentage of Student Population	0.93%	0.84%	1.10%

Satisfaction Surveys

Every two years, Forest School Board joins with 17 other jurisdictions to survey key stakeholders. The firm hired to conduct the survey chooses a sample appropriate to each board. As well, the firm offers advice on how to survey specific groups that pertain exclusively to each Board (e.g., teachers).

The surveys relate to school characteristics such as student achievement, quality of information received, role in school decision-making, and value for money. To ensure clear responses, a number of specific questions were used in the survey to cover a key area. However, these are summarized into one measure for reporting purposes. For example, when measuring how well the school system is run, parents were asked specific questions that related to programming, finances and services offered.

The following table outlines the response rate and margins of error of the surveys conducted in 1996/97 compared to 1994/95.

	1994/95			1996/97		
	Number Surveyed	Percent Responded	Margin of Error	Number Surveyed	Percent Responded	Margin of Error
Students	200	59.0%	± 5%	200	69.5%	± 4%
Parents	200	51.5%	± 5%	200	56.0%	± 5%
Special Needs Parents	100	77.0%	±3%	100	62.0%	± 4%
Business & Community Organizations	100	37.0%	± 8%	100	44.0%	± 7%
Teachers	160	70.0%	± 3%	159	61.0%	± 4%
Taxpayers (no children in school)	200	43.5%	± 7%	200	64.0%	± 7%

for discussion purposes only (hypothetical data)

Results

Goal 1

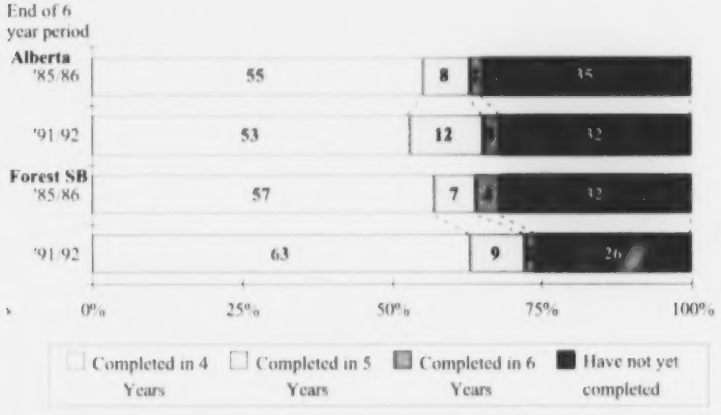
Focus education on what students need to learn; ensure that high standards are established, communicated and achieved.

Measure:

What Does This Tell Us?

- Forest School Board's four year and six year completion rates are higher than the provincial average.
- During the six year period ending in 1991/92, 63% of Forest School Board students finished high school in four years. This is a 6% increase over the period ending in 1985/86.

Percent of Grade 9 Class Completing High School Over a Six Year* Period: Forest School Board Compared Over Time and with the Province



* Six years is equivalent to grades 9, 10, 11 and 12 plus two additional years. If tracking began at Grade 10, it would not account for students who had already dropped out.

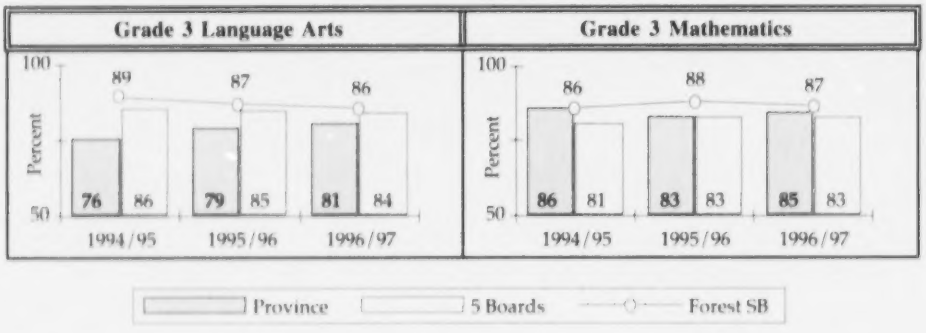
Many students who have not completed within this time frame eventually do complete, either in a regular high school, or at a post-secondary institution.

Measure:

What Does This Tell Us?

- In both subject areas, the percentage of Grade 3 students in Forest School Board achieving acceptable results is higher than the Alberta average and the average achieved by 5 similar boards in 1996/97.

Percent of Students Achieving Acceptable Results* on Grade 3 Provincial Achievement Tests: Forest School Board Compared With the Province and 5 Similar Boards Over Time



* Acceptable performance refers to the level of knowledge and skills deemed necessary for the students to proceed to the next level.

Acceptable performance levels are set for each test in consultation with teachers, as well as representatives of business and professional groups and other community groups.

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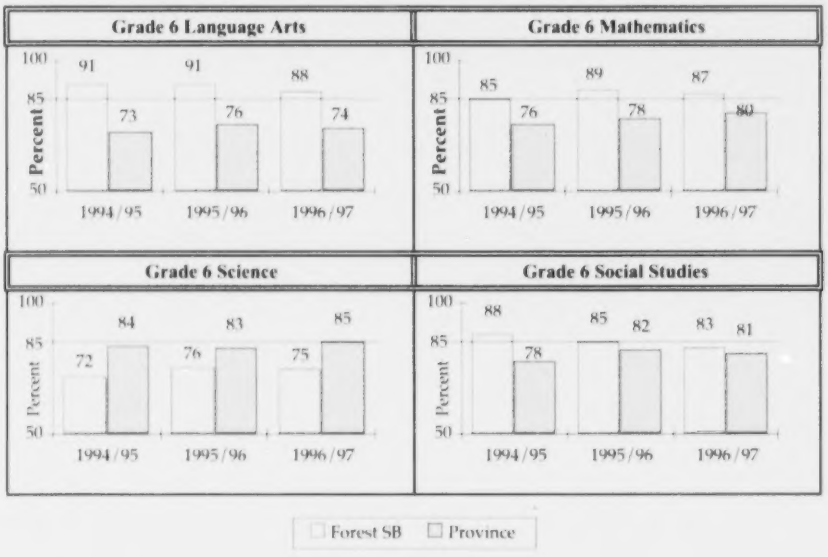
Measure:

What Does This Tell Us?

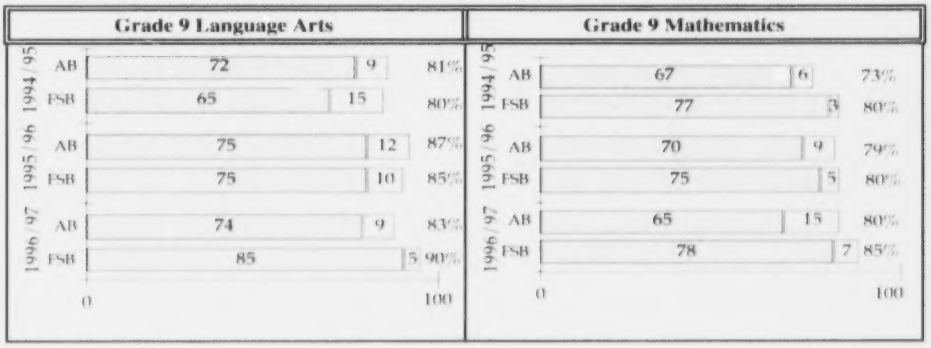
- With the exception of science, Forest School Board results were better than the Alberta average each year.
- Performance in Grade 6 Language Arts and Mathematics is at or above the level expected by the Province.
- Forest School Board Grade 6 performance in Social Studies has declined over time.
- Forest School Board performance in Grade 6 Science has not shown any consistent improvements over time and remains below the provincial average.

Percent of Students Achieving Acceptable Results* on Grade 6 and 9 Provincial Achievement Tests: Forest School Board Compared With the Province Over Time

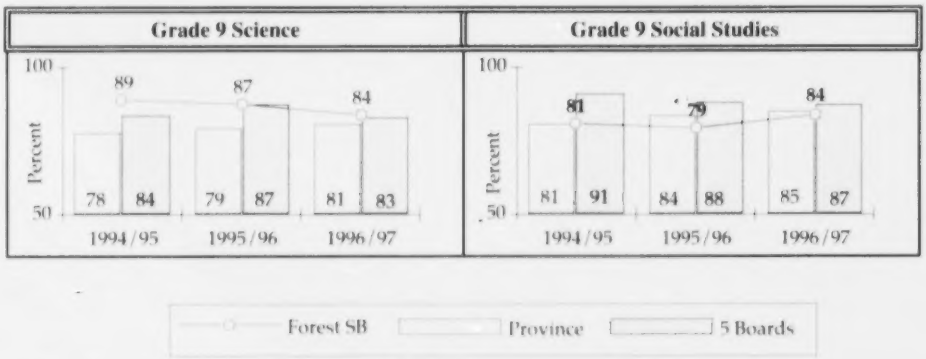


What Does This Tell Us?

- The proportion of Forest School board students achieving acceptable results in Grade 9 Language Arts has improved, while the proportion of students achieving excellent results has declined.
- More Forest School Board students continue to achieve acceptable results in Grade 9 Mathematics than the Alberta average. However, not enough Forest students are achieving the standard of excellence.
- Performance of Forest School Board students in Grade 9 science has declined over time, but remains better than the provincial average.
- The performance of Forest School Board Grade 9 social studies students remains lower than the performance of the 5 similar boards and the provincial average. However, the gap in performance is narrowing.



AB = Province, FSB = Forest School Board



* Acceptable performance refers to the level of knowledge and skills deemed necessary for the students to proceed to the next level.

The Board and Province expect at least 85% of the students to do well - 70% to achieve acceptable results and at least 15% to achieve excellent results.

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Measure:

What Does This Tell Us?

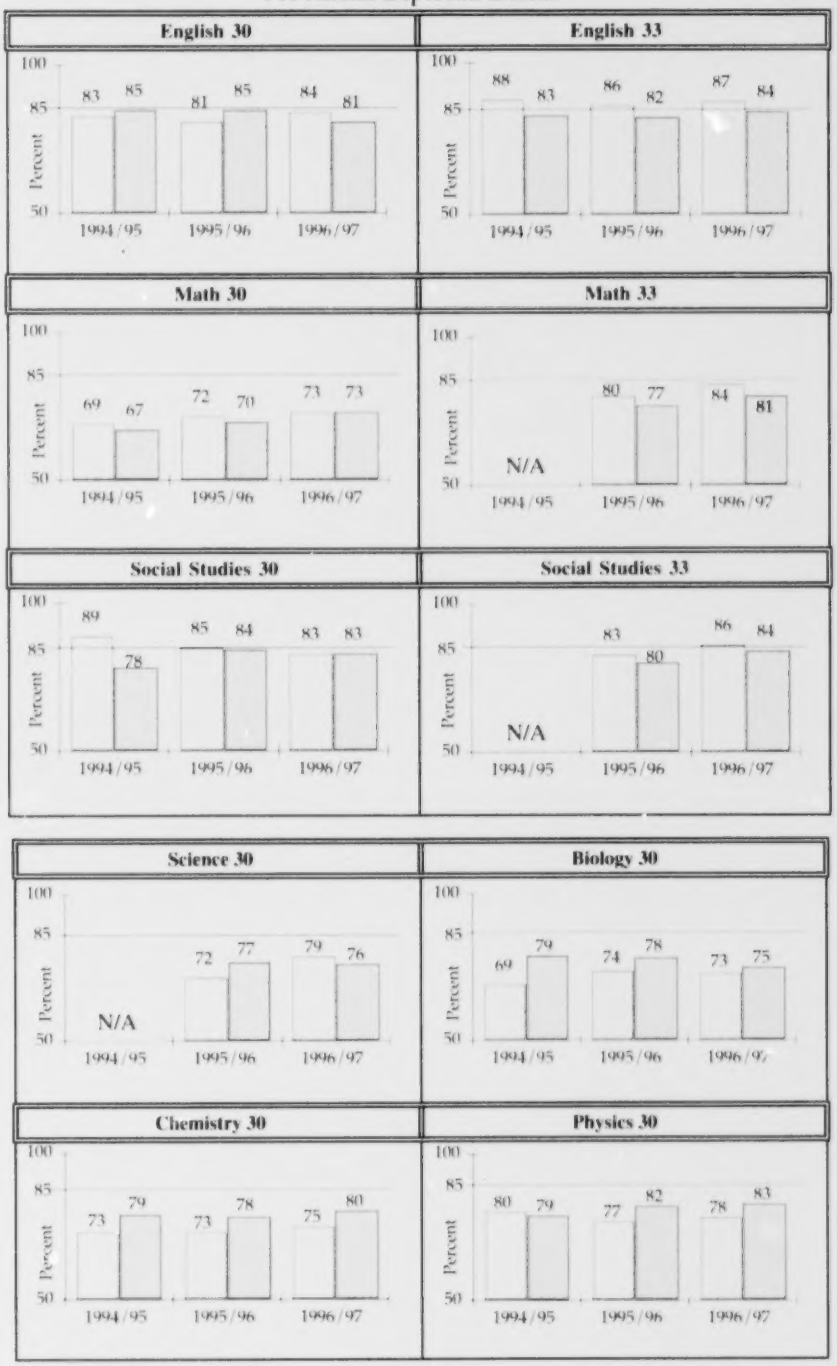
- Forest School Board was able to have students achieve very well in English 30 & 33 while having a higher proportion of students in the district take English 30 and about the same proportion of students take English 33.
- While district performance in Mathematics 33 exceeded provincial performance levels, the participation rates for this subject was below the provincial level.
- Performance and participation rates of students in Chemistry 30, Biology 30 and Physics 30 need improvement.

Forest School Board Diploma Examination Participation Rates Compared to Provincial Rates

		'94/95	'95/96	'96/97
English	30	A	A	A
	33	S	S	S
Math	30	S	A	S
	33	n/a	B	B
Social	30	S	A	A
	33	n/a	S	S
Science	30	n/a	A	S
Biology	30	A	B	S
Chem	30	A	B	B
Physics	30	A	S	B

A=Above, S=Similar, or B=Below the provincial average.

Percentage of Forest School Board Students Achieving Acceptable Results* on Provincial Diploma Exams



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* Acceptable performance refers to the level of knowledge and skills deemed necessary for the students to proceed to the next level. Students who achieve acceptable results receive an exam mark of 50% or higher.

The Board and Province expect at least 85% of the students to achieve acceptable results.

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Goal 2

Provide parents with greater opportunity to select schools and programs of their choice and enable greater parent and community involvement in education.

Measure:

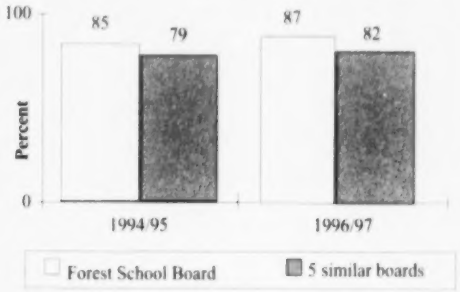
What Does This Tell Us?

- More than 4 out of 5 Forest School Board students are satisfied with the choice of programs offered.

Number of Respondents

	94/95	96/97
Forest SB	118	139
5 Similar	106	112

Percent of Students Satisfied with the Choice of Programs Offered in Forest School Board



Measure:

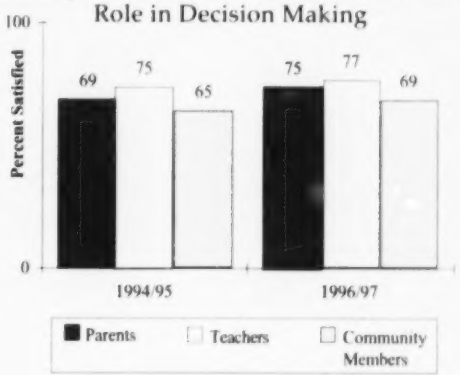
What Does This Tell Us?

- More parents, teachers and community members are becoming satisfied with their role in decision making.

Number of Respondents

	94/95	96/97
Teachers	112	97
Parents	106	112
Community	37	44

Percent of Forest School Board Parents, Teachers and Community Members who are Satisfied with Their Role in Decision Making

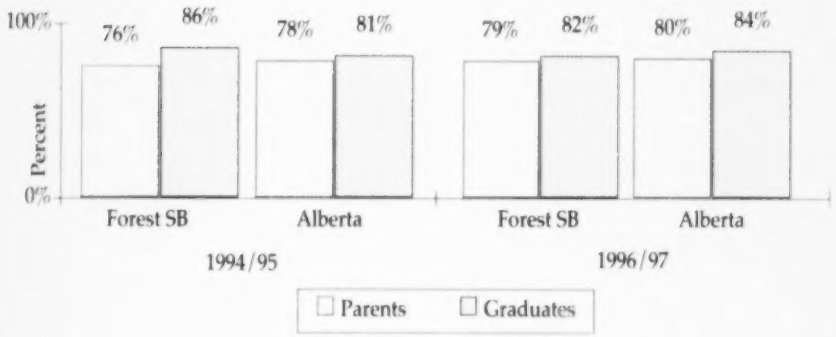


Measure:

What Does This Tell Us?

- Slightly fewer Forest School Board parents and graduates were satisfied than parents and graduates across Alberta in 1996/97.
- Fewer Forest School Board graduates were satisfied in 1996/97.
- Fewer parents than graduates were satisfied in 1996/97 but the gap is narrowing.

Overall, How Satisfied Are You with the Quality of the Education Received in High School?



Number of Respondents

Parents	94/95	96/97	Graduates	94/95	96/97
Forest	106	112	Forest	118	139
Alberta	1,067	1,101	Alberta	711	689

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Improve the coordination of services for special needs children.

Measure:

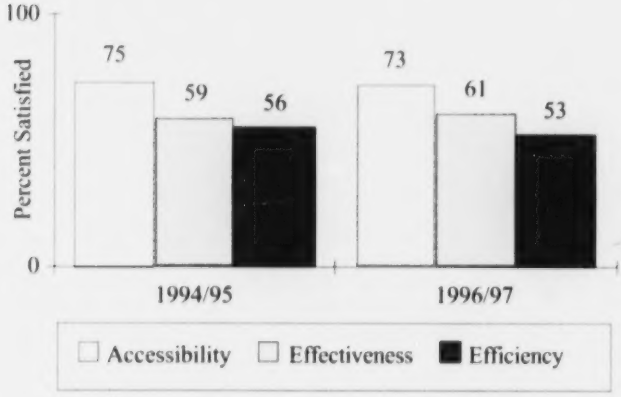
What Does This Tell Us?

- About 3/4 of Forest School Board parents of children with special needs are satisfied with accessibility of services.
- About 40% are dissatisfied with the efficiency and effectiveness of the services.

Number of Respondents

1994/95	177
1996/97	162

Percent of Forest School Board Parents of Children with Special Needs who are Satisfied with Accessibility, Effectiveness and Efficiency of Services for Their Children

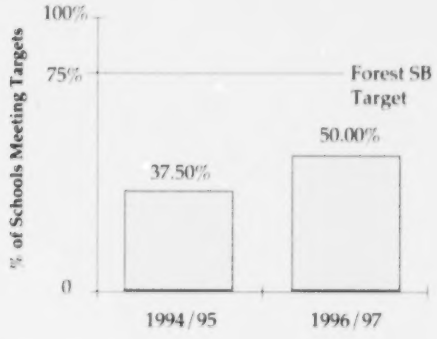


Measure:

What Does This Tell Us?

- The percentage of schools meeting their targets has increased but remains below the target set by Forest School Board.

Parent and Teacher Satisfaction with Their School's Use of Community Agencies to Meet the Needs of Children: Percent of Schools Meeting Their Target*



* Each school identifies what it considers an acceptable percentage of satisfied parents and teachers. Forest School Board wants 75% of its schools to meet these local targets.

for discussion purposes only (hypothetical data)

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Improve teaching.

Measure:

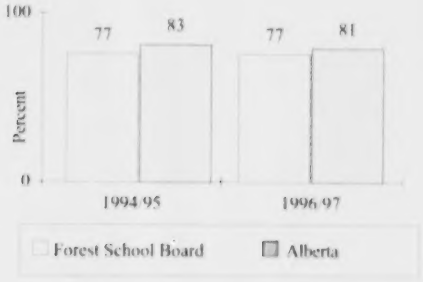
What Does This Tell Us?

- About a quarter of Forest School Board teachers are dissatisfied and this hasn't changed over the two comparison years.

Number of Respondents

	1994/95	1996/97
Forest SB	111	97
Alberta	571	596

Percent of Teachers Who Are Satisfied That Their Current Knowledge, Skills and Attributes Match Their Teaching Assignments



Measure:

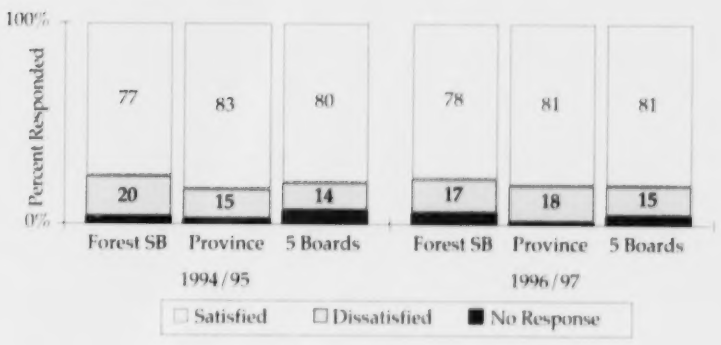
What Does This Tell Us?

- More than 3/4 of Forest School Board teachers are satisfied. This is a bit less than the average found across Alberta and the 5 similar boards.

Number of Respondents

	1994/95	1996/97
Forest SB	112	97
5 Boards	603	591
Alberta	571	596

Percent of Teachers Satisfied with Their Authority to Choose Appropriate Teaching Strategies



Measure:

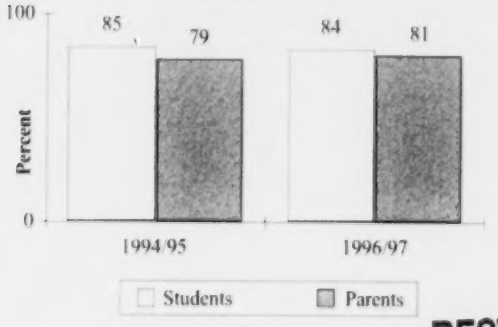
What Does This Tell Us?

- More students than parents gave teachers a satisfactory or better rating each year. This gap has narrowed.

Number of Respondents

	1994/95	1996/97
Students	118	139
Parents	106	112

Percent of Teaching Staff Whose Performance is Rated as Satisfactory or Better by Students and Parents



* Data are from school level surveys.

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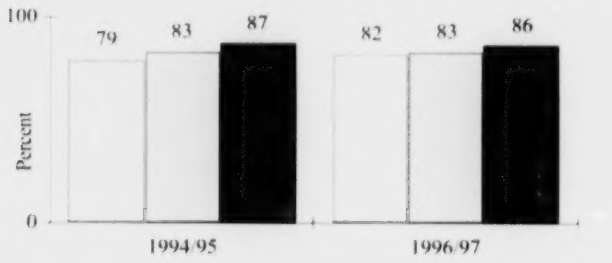
Goal 5

Achieve increased efficiencies and effectiveness in the school system through restructuring the governance and delivery of education.

5

Measure:

Percent of Parents Satisfied that Their School System is Well Run



What Does This Tell Us?

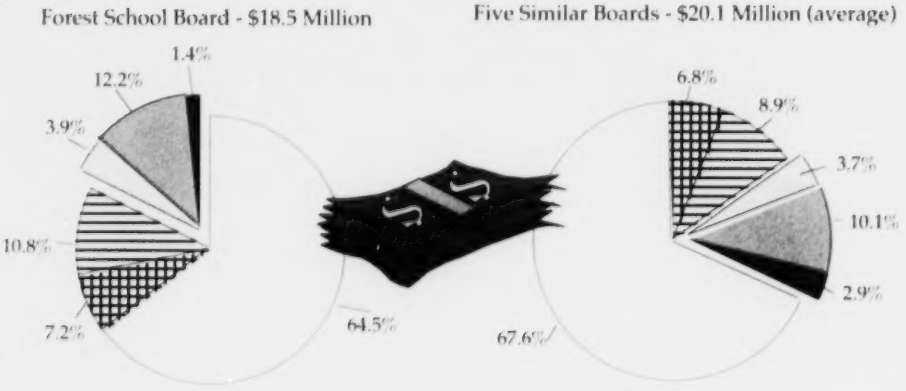
- More than 80% of Forest School Board parents surveyed in 1996/97 said their school system is well run, a slight improvement over 1994/95.
- Fewer Forest School Board parents are satisfied than parents for the 5 similar boards.

Number of Respondents

	1994/95	1996/97
Forest SB	106	112
5 Boards	470	503
Alberta	1,067	1,101

Measure:

Percent Of School Expenditures Compared To Other Expenditures (1996/97)



School Expenditures

- Classroom Instruction
- Classroom Support
- School Operations & Maintenance

Other Expenditures

- Board & System Operations
- Transportation
- Construction & Debt Servicing not related to Schools

What Does This Tell Us?

- Forest School Board directs 82.5% of its funds to schools. This compares to 83.3% for the 5 similar boards.
- Transportation makes up a greater proportion of Forest School Board's expenditures than it does among the 5 similar boards.

Note: Classroom instruction includes salaries and supplies.

Classroom support includes school administration, secretaries, librarians, counsellors, and professional development.

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Goal 6

Ensure that all schools are adequately and equitably funded.

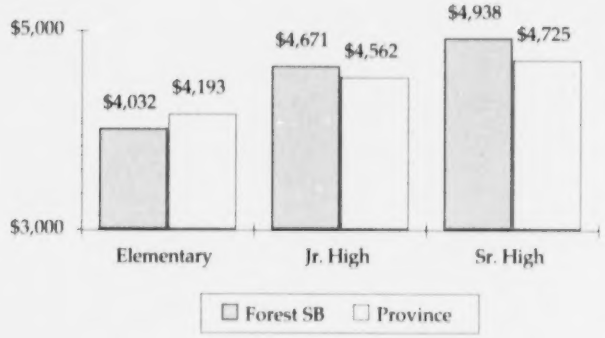
6

Measure:

Average Expenditure per Student by School Type, 1996/97

What Does This Tell Us?

- Compared to the province, Forest School Board allocates more funding per student at the junior and senior high school level and less funding at the elementary level.



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Goal 7

Ensure that the cost of education is reasonable and under control.

7

Measure:

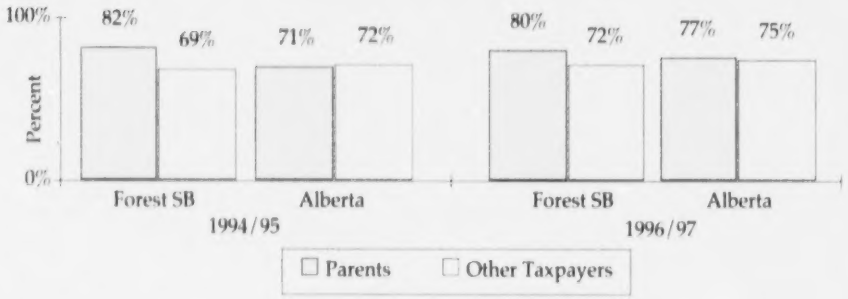
What Does This Tell Us?

- Forest School Board has had better overall success in satisfying its parents with the education value received for their tax dollar than have boards across Alberta.
- Forest School Board needs to improve its communication with other Forest School Board tax payers.

Number of Respondents

	1994/95	1996/97
Forest SB		
Parents	106	112
Taxpayers	87	128
Alberta		
Parents	1,067	1,101
Taxpayers	631	708

Percent of Parents and Other Taxpayers who are Satisfied that They are Receiving Value for Their Tax Dollars in Their School Board



Measure:

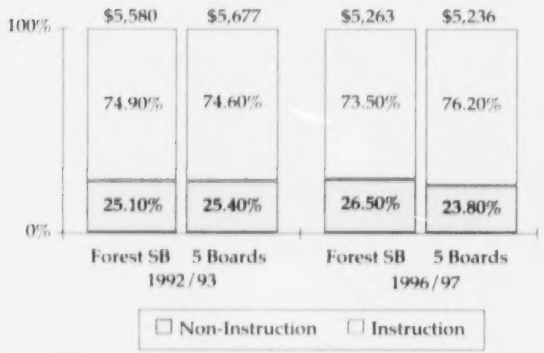
What Does This Tell Us?

- In 1996/97 the total cost per student declined in Forest School Board compared to 1992/93 costs.
- The percentage of funds spent on instruction in Forest School Board fell 1.4% and rose an average of 1.6% for the 5 similar boards between 1992/93 and 1996/97.

Number of Students

	1992/93	1996/97
Forest SB	3,458	3,934
5 Boards (average)	3,923	4,331

Cost Per Student Compared to 1992/93



Note: Instruction includes salaries and classroom supplies.

Non-instruction costs include classroom support services, administration and trustees salaries, capital construction and debt services, building and grounds maintenance.

Transportation is not included in these figures.

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Ensure that the school system is open and accountable.

8

Measure:

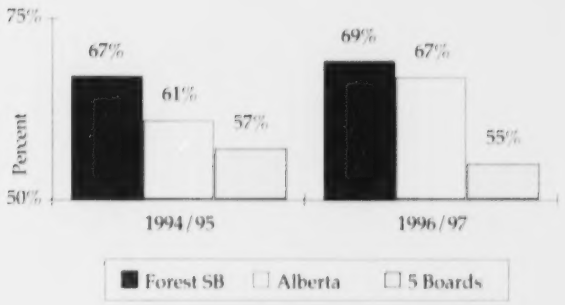
What Does This Tell Us?

- More Forest School Board parents are satisfied than parents across Alberta and in the 5 similar boards.
- Slightly more than 2/3 of Forest School Board parents are satisfied with the quality of information.
- Forest School Board is not improving as fast as the average across Alberta but is much better than the 5 similar boards.

Number of Respondents

	1994/95	1996/97
Forest SB	106	112
Alberta	1,067	1,101
5 Boards	472	503

Parent Satisfaction with the Quality of Information Received From Their School About Their Child's Educational Achievement?



Note: Information may include: report cards, provincial diploma results or other test results, interviews and notes or phone calls from the teacher.

Measure:

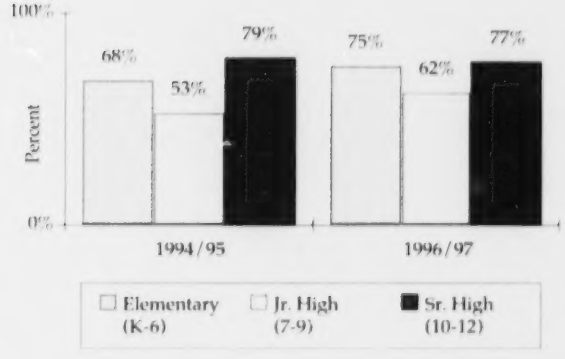
What Does This Tell Us?

- The percentage of satisfied elementary and junior high parents has increased. However, more needs to be done at the junior high school level.

Number of Respondents

	1994/95	1996/97
Elementary	358	382
Junior High	129	207
Senior High	119	149

Parent Satisfaction with the Use of Results Information to Improve Education their School*



* Based on School-level information

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What Next: Addressing our Results

Performance Indices

Each year, Forest School Board invites parents, community and business representatives and school staff to assess the district's performance in key areas using several indices. Specific guidelines are provided to help the reviewers calculate index scores in a consistent fashion. In 1996/97, there were 39 participants in the review process.

	Benchmark Year 1994/95	1996/97
High School Completion Index	❑	❑
Student Results Index	❑	❑
Parental & Community Involvement Index	❑	❑
Coordinated Services Index	❑	❑
Teaching Excellence Index	❑	❑
Efficiencies and Effectiveness Index	❑	❑
Equitable Funding Index	❑	❑
Reasonable Cost Index	❑	❑
Open & Accountable Index	❑	❑
Composite Education Index	❑	❑

Improvement Plan

Your Forest School Board has assessed the results for the 1994/95 - 1996/97 school years and makes the following commitments to improve the quality of education in this district. These and other actions will be incorporated into our 1998/99 - 2000/2001 Education Plan:

By 1997/98

- Ensure the instructional cost per student per day is within ± 2% of the average found among the 5 similar boards.
  - Reduce expenditures on construction and debt servicing by 4%;

By 1998/99

- The percentage of students achieving acceptable performance in Science 30, Biology 30, Chemistry 30 and Physics 30 Diploma Exams will increase to 84%, 78%, 80% and 83% respectively (5% gain).
  - Direct additional resources towards Grade 10, 11, and 12 science labs;
  - Invite the business and research communities to sponsor classrooms in the High School Science fairs.
  - Initiate a district wide professional development program for science teachers and facilitate greater inter-school curriculum planning.

- Achieve an 80% parental satisfaction level with the quality of the information received about their children's educational achievement.
  - Principals, school department heads and the Assistant Superintendent will meet with parents during the 1997/98 school year to discuss how better to meet their information needs.

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For further information contact the Board Office at 555-1234

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FEEDBACK: WHAT THE MLA TEAM HAS HEARD IN CONSULTATIONS SO FAR

SPECIFIC INFORMATION PEOPLE WANT TO SEE IN RESULTS REPORTS

CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

- Student conduct, including the good things students do in schools
- Initiatives to support learning
- Programs provided
- Business partnerships and sponsorships
- Explanatory information e.g., a school district's suspension policy
- Profile of parent involvement: e.g., parent attendance at school council meetings, curriculum evenings, interviews, strategic planning sessions; number of volunteer hours
- Profile of teacher involvement
- Enrollment and staffing
- Maximum and minimum classroom sizes at various levels instead of student-teacher ratio
- Student mobility
- Celebrate success

STUDENT RESULTS

- Achievement test and diploma exam results
- The percent of eligible students who write the exams
- The percent of students who achieve excellent results
- How students do on non-academic courses: their preparation for life and citizenship including teamwork and personal management skills
- High school completion rate and explanations for the data, including why students do not complete

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

- Comparisons of financial data to the educational results achieved
- Cost per student per day and per year over time; compare school, district and provincial costs
- How the school budget is spent; differences in costs e.g., staff salaries and classroom supplies
- A districts' expenditures over time and compared to the provincial average
- Large districts' average expenditures for elementary, junior high and senior high
- What schools and school districts are doing to improve efficiency and effectiveness
- Extent of user fees

SATISFACTION MEASURES

- Student satisfaction
  - How satisfied students are e.g., are students encouraged to learn?
  - Develop a satisfaction measure for students three years after graduation
- Parent satisfaction
  - With decision making and the types of decisions made by parents
  - With teaching strategies
  - With value for tax dollars
  - With the level of user fees
  - Satisfaction of parents involved in education compared to those who aren't or cannot be
  - Overall parent satisfaction with education
- Teacher satisfaction
  - Objective measures about the process of teaching such as the number of courses, workshops and professional development seminars teachers attend
  - With their jobs
- Business / post secondary satisfaction
  - With recent graduates e.g., ability to work in teams; to come to work on time
  - Note: employer and post-secondary instructor satisfaction are very important to parents

OTHER GENERAL COMMENTS ABOUT SATISFACTION MEASURES

- Clarify what is an acceptable level of satisfaction
- Be specific about what satisfaction means e.g., with high school education
- Report the range of satisfaction – very satisfied to very dissatisfied
- Include examples of questions and actual written comments by respondents
- Provide contextual information so people know who made the comments, the number eligible to respond and the number that responded
- Ensure the same methodology is used by everyone doing surveys

IMPROVEMENT GOALS AND ACTION PLANS

- Each school district needs to report on its priority improvement goals
- Align school priority improvement goals with the district's goals and mention this in the school report
- Use provincial goals as a context for reporting local goals and priorities
- Improvement plans need to summarize how the school / school district did in relation to their goals, the strengths and weaknesses and the actions being taken to address these
- Improvement plans need to say in what ways parents and the community had input

WHAT PEOPLE SAID ABOUT COMMUNICATING RESULTS

- People want to know where they can get more detailed results information; it should be available on request e.g., school and school district improvement plans

- Post-secondary institutions want school district and provincial data

- Make financial reports accessible through the school and school district offices

- Involve the community in developing communication plans and arrange public meetings to discuss results reports

- School councils can be responsible for communicating and discussing board reports with parents

- Rely less on media reporting of results; contextual information is not likely to be reported

- Regular school reports to parents on a specific goal may be more helpful than a lengthy annual report

WHAT PEOPLE SAID ABOUT USING RESULTS AND INVOLVING THEM IN FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

- Parents want to be involved in designing and implementing an accountability system that gives them the information they want and need

- Parents involved in the school can help monitor school performance and ensure results are acted upon

- Involve students, parents, staff and the community in setting improvement objectives and strategies in areas where the results point to needed improvements

- Invite school councils and community members to meet with the school board about the district results report

- Ask regularly how results information is being used to address strengths and weaknesses and improve learning

- Ask regularly how the strategies and resources used to follow-up on results are working

- Follow-up where schools and school districts are not complying with or meeting standards

OTHER SUGGESTIONS ABOUT THE CONTENT OF PROTOTYPE RESULTS REPORTS

ORGANIZATION, TONE, AND LENGTH OF PROTOTYPE RESULTS REPORTS

- Organization of reports around goals is good
- Strengthen the link to the school / school district's plans, including improvement priorities and plans
- School report is welcoming, easy to read
- School report provides valuable information; have never seen anything like this before
- The level of language needs to be appropriate to the public; have a firm picture of your audience as a starting point
- Shorten the school and school district reports
- Develop a compact version with priority results information for parents and the public

GRAPHICS

- Make graphic presentations more consistent; this will help compare different results
- The "what does this tell us" notes are important as people won't study all the graphs
- People seem to prefer bar graphs

COMPARISONS (SCHOOL, DISTRICT, PROVINCE)

Note: People's reactions to comparing information across schools, districts and with the province are mixed

- Parents want to see school results compared on standardized tests / exams
- Parents want to see comparisons of school costs including program costs
- Parents want to compare school results to enable them to make better choices about schools
- Including mandatory data in a school / district's annual results reports help parents make comparisons
- The value of comparisons of district results with five similar districts is not clear and doesn't tell a parent anything about their child's education
- Comparisons with similar districts are not feasible because of the differences in size, levels of students, and geography
- If comparisons with similar districts can be readily accomplished, then name the districts
- Provide demographic and other explanatory information to help interpret school and district comparisons
- Make comparisons to provincial standards and results (inform people what these mean) and to a school / district's own performance over time e.g., trend data
- Context measures e.g., suspension rates, need to be compared to either a provincial average or to the standard set / expected by the board
- Include comparisons with national and international results where available and possible

OTHER SPECIFIC COMMENTS ABOUT MEASURES IN THE PROTOTYPE REPORTS

- Coordination of services for children with special needs
  - Develop measures and data to show special needs children learning and value for dollars
  - Show results for special needs children to provide a context for why their parents are or are not satisfied
  - Consider providing satisfaction information for parents of special needs children in a special education report to interested parents
  - Survey teacher satisfaction
  - Include provincial level data

- Improving teaching
  - The measure on teacher knowledge, skills and attributes matching teaching assignments is not meaningful to parents
  - The measure about parent satisfaction with the performance of school staff is not a good measure for improving teaching

- Increased efficiencies and effectiveness in school and school system
  - Clarify the satisfaction measure about how well the school / school system are run e.g., are parents satisfied with programs, services or budgets?

- Reasonable education costs, under control
  - Survey taxpayers and parents for satisfaction with value for tax dollars
  - Any measures about reasonable cost need to define what is reasonable

- Open and accountable school and school system

  - The satisfaction measure on the quality of information received from school is relevant for parents; it need not include board and provincial comparisons

  - Other suggested important questions are:

    "do you receive test results information that make sense to you?"

    "are you happy with what's on the student report card"?

  - Develop a measure for accountability, not just openness

  - Measures about an open and accountable education system need to define what these mean

  - Develop a satisfaction measure to address elementary, junior high and senior high

- Composite education index / overall grade for the school and school districts

  Note: People's reactions to an overall grade for the school or school district are mixed

  - Spending taxpayers money to give a school or school district an a, b or c, etc. is not money well spent

  - Prefer an imperfect number than the status quo of keeping parents in the desert

  - Give people the information and let them make their own judgments

  - Make it meaningful e.g., include the province's grade as a comparison; show the number for the individual measures that go with it; say what the numbers are expected to be in the next few years

  - A single number is not assigned to a graduate, so why to a school?

  - Schools assign numbers to students on report cards, so why not to a school?

talking with albertans

ACCOUNTABILITY IN EDUCATION

QUESTION GUIDES TO USE IN RESPONDING TO THIS DISCUSSION PAPER

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January 1995

Alberta EDUCATION

PROTOTYPE SCHOOL REPORT
QUESTIONS TO GUIDE CONSULTATION / FEEDBACK

1. In general, how useful is the prototype school report to:

a. keep you informed about the quality of education provided by Evergreen Senior High School?

Very Useful				Not Useful	No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	☐

b. judge the performance of Evergreen Senior High School?

Very Useful				Not Useful	No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	☐

2. What information in the prototype school report is really important to you?

3. **Is there specific information missing in the prototype school report that you expected to find?** Yes ❑ No ❑

If yes, please explain:

4. **What would you change, delete or add to make the prototype school report clearer and more meaningful to you?**

5. **How would you rate the usefulness of the following comparisons:**

Comparison of School to:	Very Useful				Not Useful	No Opinion
it's own performance over time	1	2	3	4	5	❑
a target or expected level of performance set by the school	1	2	3	4	5	❑
the provincial average	1	2	3	4	5	❑
similar schools	1	2	3	4	5	❑
a named school, as chosen by the school	1	2	3	4	5	❑
the district school with the best score	1	2	3	4	5	❑

6. How useful are the following measures in helping you judge the performance of Evergreen Senior High School?

School Measures	Very Useful				Not Useful	No Opinion
Diploma exam results	1	2	3	4	5	❑
Parent, teacher and community satisfaction with their role in decision-making	1	2	3	4	5	❑
Parent and teacher satisfaction with school's use of community agencies	1	2	3	4	5	❑
Student and parent satisfaction with performance of teaching staff	1	2	3	4	5	❑
School expenditures compared to other expenditures	1	2	3	4	5	❑
Parent satisfaction with how well the school is run	1	2	3	4	5	❑
Student satisfaction with aspects of their education	1	2	3	4	5	❑
Parent and taxpayer satisfaction with the value for their tax dollar	1	2	3	4	5	❑
Cost per student compared to 1992/93	1	2	3	4	5	❑
Parent satisfaction with the quality of information received from school about their child's educational achievement	1	2	3	4	5	❑
Parent satisfaction with the school's use of results information to improve education	1	2	3	4	5	❑

7. Are there important measures which are missing from the list? Yes ❑ No ❑

If yes, which ones would you add:

PROTOTYPE SCHOOL BOARD REPORT
QUESTIONS TO GUIDE CONSULTATION / FEEDBACK

1. In general, how useful is the prototype school board report to:

a. keep you informed about the quality of education provided by Forest School Board?

Very Useful				Not Useful	No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	☐

b. judge the performance of Forest School Board?

Very Useful				Not Useful	No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	☐

2. What information in the prototype school board report is really important to you?

3. **Is there specific information missing in the prototype school board report that you expected to find?** Yes ❑ No ❑

If yes, please explain:

4. **What would you change, delete or add to make the prototype school board report clearer and more meaningful to you?**

5. **How would you rate the usefulness of the following comparisons:**

Comparison of School Board to:	Very Useful				Not Useful	No Opinion
it's own performance over time	1	2	3	4	5	❑
a target or expected level of performance set by the board	1	2	3	4	5	❑
the provincial average	1	2	3	4	5	❑
similar districts	1	2	3	4	5	❑
a named district, as chosen by the board	1	2	3	4	5	❑
the best scoring district in the province	1	2	3	4	5	❑

6. How useful are the following measures in helping you judge the performance of Forest School Board?

School Board Measures	Very Useful				Not Useful	No Opinion
High school completion	1	2	3	4	5	❑
Achievement test and diploma exam results	1	2	3	4	5	❑
Student satisfaction with choice of programs offered by board	1	2	3	4	5	❑
Parent, teacher and community satisfaction with their role in decision-making	1	2	3	4	5	❑
Parent and graduate satisfaction with quality of education	1	2	3	4	5	❑
Satisfaction of parents of children with special needs with the accessibility, effectiveness and efficiency of services	1	2	3	4	5	❑
Parent and teacher satisfaction with use of community agencies: percent of schools meeting targets	1	2	3	4	5	❑
Teacher satisfaction with the match between current knowledge, skills and attributes and their teaching assignments	1	2	3	4	5	❑
Teacher satisfaction with authority to choose teaching strategies	1	2	3	4	5	❑
Student and parent satisfaction with performance of teaching staff	1	2	3	4	5	❑
Parent satisfaction with how well the school system is run	1	2	3	4	5	❑
Percent of school expenditures compared to other expenditures	1	2	3	4	5	❑
Average expenditures per student by school type	1	2	3	4	5	❑
Parent and taxpayer satisfaction with the value for their tax dollar	1	2	3	4	5	❑
Cost per student compared to 1992/93	1	2	3	4	5	❑
Parent satisfaction with the quality of information received from school about their child's educational achievement	1	2	3	4	5	❑
Parent satisfaction with the school's use of results information to improve education	1	2	3	4	5	❑

7. Are there important measures which are missing from the list? Yes ❑ No ❑

If yes, which ones would you add:

_____

_____

_____

_____

COMMUNICATING RESULTS
QUESTIONS TO GUIDE CONSULTATION / FEEDBACK

1. People have different needs for education results information and will use it differently. Which of the following results reports would you want to receive?

	Yes	No
School results?	❑	❑
School district results?	❑	❑
Provincial results (Alberta Education)?	❑	❑

2. **For the results reports that you want to receive**, how would you like this information presented and reported to you?

From the school?

From the school district?

From the Province?

USING RESULTS
QUESTIONS TO GUIDE CONSULTATION / FEEDBACK

1. Would you like to be involved in selecting areas to improve education based on reported results?

	Yes	No
For school results?	❑	❑
For school district results?	❑	❑

2. **If you answered yes to one or both of the above**, in what ways would you want to be involved?

At the school level?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

At the school district level?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. Would you want to be involved in other follow-up initiatives aimed at using results?

Yes ❑ No ❑

If yes, please explain:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

To help the MLA Team analyze people's responses, we would like to ask a few questions. Your responses will be used for statistical purposes only.

1. I/we currently live in:

Calgary / Edmonton	❑	a rural community	❑
other urban centre	❑	a farm	❑

2. Gender:

female	❑	male	❑

3. Age:

under 17 years	❑	45 to 64 years	❑
18 to 24 years	❑	65+ years	❑
25 to 44 years	❑		

4. Do you have children in school?

ECS to Grade 6	❑	Grade 10 to 12	❑
Grade 7 to 9	❑	No children in school	❑

5. How are you involved in education?

student	❑	superintendent	❑
parent	❑	school council	❑
teacher	❑	school volunteer	❑
trustee	❑	other: _____	❑
school administrator	❑		

6. Optional

Representing a group? Yes ❑ No ❑ Number in Group? _____

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

_____

_____

Telephone (Daytime): _____

Thank you for providing your feedback.
Please mail or fax your completed questionnaire and any other comments about the discussion paper to:

Mr. Victor Doerksen
Chairman, MLA Implementation Team on Accountability
725 Legislature Annex, 9718 - 107 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 1E4
Fax: (403) 422-1671

by February 28, 1995.

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